

VILLA PREMIERE PRESENTATION

four larks

presents

KATABASIS

Thursday, January 24, at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, January 25, at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 26, at 7:30 p.m.

This performance is approximately eighty minutes, with no intermission.

PLEASE silence all cellular telephones and other electronic devices.

No unauthorized videotaping, audiotaping, or photography is permitted during the performance.



VILLA THEATER LAB STAFF

Performing Programs Head Laurel Kishi
Senior Public Programs Specialist..... Ralph Flores
Senior Public Programs Coordinator Anna Woo
Audiovisual Specialists..... Heather Alvear, Chris Jeong, Marvin Jones
Getty Events Heather Leisy and Ashley Hayes

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KATABASIS

CREATED, STAGED, AND COMPOSED BY MAT SWEENEY
SET/PROP DESIGN AND CHOREOGRAPHY BY SEBASTIAN PETERS-LAZARO
LYRICS CO-WRITTEN WITH JESSE RASMUSSEN

Devised as a site-specific performance around the architecture of the Getty Villa, and inspired by the exhibition ‘*Underworld: Imagining the Afterlife.*’

Associate Producer and Stage Manager	Miranda Peters-Lazaro
Assistant Choreographer	Eli Weinberg
Costume Design	Mieko Romming
Make-up	Mieko Romming and Jesse Rasmussen
Mask Design	Regan Baumgarten
Lighting Design	Brandon Baruch
Sound Design	David McKeever
Production Assistants	William Potter, Thomas Ravago, Crystal Gehr
Steel Bell Design	Tom Peyton & Shawn HibmaCronan

Music composed and directed by Mat Sweeney, developed and arranged with the ensemble. (*Music for ‘Cerberus’ & ‘Tantalus’ written with Ellen Warkentine.)

Movement developed in collaboration with the ensemble.

ENSEMBLE

Sheila Brown Ellis
Maya Gingery (Flute)
Yvette Cornelia Holzwarth (Violin)
Sharon Chohi Kim
Jett Kwong (Guzheng)
Matt Orenstein (Bass)
Lukas Papenfusscline
Ryan Parrish (Kaval / Saxophone)
Zachary Carlisle Sanders
Titus Tompkins (Banjo)
James Vitz-Wong (Bass)
James Waterman (Percussion)
Eli Weinberg

PERFORMANCE AT THE GETTY VILLA

The Getty Villa’s public programs are designed to amplify and enhance the Museum visitor’s insight into the people and cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world. Throughout the year, the Villa presents an engaging spectrum of events, anchored by its innovative theater program.

The Villa Theater Lab series fosters the work of artists employing creative, often experimental approaches to the performance of ancient stories. The Villa Auditorium’s range of technologies have enabled teams of both newly emerging and long distinguished artists—directors, designers, musicians, playwrights, and actors—to freely incorporate advanced stage, sound, and visual elements into productions developed in residence here at the Villa.

Each September a major production is commissioned and presented in the Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman Theater, an outdoor performance space based on ancient prototypes. In 2019 director and playwright Aaron Posner, winner of the Helen Hayes and Barrymore awards, directs *The Heal*, his adaptation of Sophocles’s *Philoctetes*.

From autumn through spring, the Villa’s public programming also includes music and film screenings. To receive information about Getty Museum exhibitions, performances, and lecture events, please subscribe to the monthly e-Getty newsletter at getty.edu/subscribe.

UPCOMING VILLA PUBLIC PROGRAM

The Oedipus/Antigone Project - Villa Theater Lab

Lionel Popkin

Friday, March 8, 2019; 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 9, 2019; 3:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 10, 2019; 3:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$7

Choreographer Lionel Popkin's new evening-length choreo-play is inspired by the gap between two of Sophocles' best known plays, *Oedipus Rex* and *Oedipus at Colonus*. The multimedia performance follows Oedipus and Antigone traveling between lands and between plays to question contemporary notions of displacement, exile, and homeland.

CREATORS' NOTES

katabasis ('descent to the underworld') is a ritual journey through the realm of death, inspired by ancient mystery rites. Little is known about the specific content of the secretive rituals that this performance emulates, which sought to endow participants with exclusive insight to navigate the afterlife and enlighten their remaining time on earth. We can reasonably conclude that they involved music, travel, initiative rites, and performative reenactment, further dissolving the line between religious and performance practice in the Greek world. They ranged from the public initiation journey to Eleusis to chronicle the seasonal rebirth of Persephone, to less mainstream rituals which traced the trail of Orpheus or Dionysus. Their content was tailored to specific local interests and spiritual concerns. To that end, we have curated a selection of narratives and characters whose perspectives are most useful for our collective expedition.

In our third creative development at the Getty Villa, we continue to investigate the relationship between performance and ritual, and the relevance of these mythic narratives to contemporary ethical concerns. We're emphatically grateful to the Getty Villa for the opportunity to use the whole of their glorious grounds to map out the geography of Hades and activate our ritual procession in a wild experiment that we're thrilled to share with you. Welcome initiates.

"Now you have died and now you have come into being, O thrice happy one, on this same day. Tell Persephone that the Bacchic One himself released you."

PROGRAM

1 INITIATION:

Soloist- Lukas Papenfusscline

An invitation to cross the threshold; to seek blessings from Persephone and find what has been lost.

2 MOIRAI (Fates)

Soloist- Jett Kwong

Three sisters, the Fates: Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, determine the destiny of Gods and mortals alike, as they spin and cut the threads of life.

3 CHARON

Soloist- Zachary Carlisle Sanders (Charon)

Charon the boatman ferries the dead across the river, charging the dead a gold coin for passage.

4 THE SHORE OF THE DEAD

Soloist- Yvette Cornelia Holzwarth

Beasts await on the other side of the river Styx.

5 CERBERUS

Soloists- Lukas Papenfusscline, Titus Tompkins and Zachary Carlisle Sanders (Cerberus)

A three-headed hound guards the gate, permitting only the righteous.

6 THE RIVER LETHE

Soloist- Sheila Brown Ellis (Goddess of the River)

The goddess of the river Lethe entices the newly arrived dead to drink from the river and thereby abandon their memory and earthly consciousness to become shades. We next proceed into Tartarus, where the most exceptional sinners face eternal torment.

THE DESIGNERS

Mieko Romming - CalArts BFA14- inspired by the beauty of nature, history, and folklore. Romming's work has been shown at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Sundance, and REDCAT. After designing *hymns* at the Getty Villa, it has been a dream collaboration bringing mythology to life/ death once again with four larks' *katabasis*.

Regan Baumgarten is an Ovation award-nominated scenic designer and installation artist. She has designed for productions by Spiegelworld, Wet The Hippo and Yeaheavy Studios. This is her fifth collaboration with four larks, having worked previously on *Orpheus*, *The Temptation of St. Antony*, *Undine* and *ὕμνος/hymns*.

Brandon Baruch four larks: *Sessions*, *Undine*, *hymns*, and *The Temptation of St. Antony*. Design highlights: *Creep LA* (JFI Productions); *The Demise* (NYMF); *Bataré* (West Coast Tour); *Asterion* (Getty Villa; Wrocław, Poland); *Iceland* (Ford Amphitheatre); *VATIC* (LA and NYC); *Queenie Pie* (Long Beach Opera, Chicago Opera Theater); *Twist Your Dickens* (Kirk Douglas Theater.) brandonbaruch.com

Dave McKeever is a composer, sound designer, and producer. He is a founder of the Hollywood Fringe Festival, and was a 2003 Helen Hayes Award nominee. He rejoins four larks after serving as sound designer and audio engineer for their work with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra's Session series.

Malkhut by Secret Chiefs 3, arranged by Trey Spruance, included in John Zorn's *Masada, Book 3: Beri'ah*.

Lukas Papenfusscline is a creator/performer of music and theater based in New York City. They have previously appeared in four larks' *Undine* and *Homeric Hymns*. Recently, they have worked with Ran Blake, Kate Soper, and their folk band, mammifères, which will release its debut album on November 23rd. lukaspapenfusscline.com

Zachary Carlisle Sanders is a Los Angeles-based actor, dancer and singer/songwriter. He has performed with four larks since 2014, in *Orpheus*, *The Temptation of St Antony*, and *Homeric Hymns*. Other theater credits include Peter Evans in *Bug*, Berger in *Hair*, and Oberon/Theseus in *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Titus Tompkins is a Brooklyn-based actor/musician. Recent credits include *The Winter's Tale* (Theatre for a New Audience), *Peer Gynt and the Norwegian Hapa Band* (Ma-Yi Theatre Company), *The Merchant of Venice* (Compagnia de' Columbari), and *Younger* (TV Land). His album, *Hard Hope*, will be released this December.

James Vitz-Wong is a multidisciplinary artist and performer from Seattle, residing in Southern California. James holds an MFA from California Institute of the Arts and a BM from Oberlin Conservatory. He was a 2018 recipient of the Interdisciplinary Grant from CalArts and will choreograph for *The Last Dodo* in 2019. jamesvw.com

James Waterman is a percussionist and composer based in Los Angeles. He regularly collaborates with ensembles Dhara World Music and Derrick Spiva & Bridge to Everywhere, and has performed at such venues as SF-JAZZ, PASIC, and NBC's Today Show. *katabasis* is James's second show with four larks after performing in 2017's *Undine*. jameswatermanmusic.com

Eli Weinberg, originally from Arcadia, is a performer, teacher and director. He recently served as choreographer on Spiegelworld's *Opium* and teaches and performs extensively with John Gilkey's The Idiot Workshop. This is his fifth engagement with four larks, previously performing in *The Temptation of St. Antony*, *Undine* and in collaboration with LACO. eliweinberg.work

7 TANTALUS

Soloists- Sharon Chohi Kim (Tantalus) & Lukas Papenfusscline (his grapes)

Tantalus eternally reaches for his grapes, but they remain ever out of his grasp.

8 TITYOS

Movement- Titus Tompkins (Tityos), Eli Weinberg and Zachary Carlisle Sanders (Vultures)

Tityos' liver is eaten by vultures, but every morning it regenerates only to be devoured again at night.

9 DANAIIDS

Soloists- Maya Gingery, Jett Kwong, and Sharon Chohi Kim (Danaiids)

The daughters of Danaus are tasked to fill a leaking vessel using only sieves.

10 SISYPHUS

Soloist- Eli Weinberg (Sisyphus), Titus Tompkins and Yvette Cornelia Holzwarth

Sisyphus labors to perch his boulder atop a mountain, but it will always roll back down again after reaching the top.

11 JUDGES

Soloists- Sharon Chohi Kim, Lukas Papenfusscline, and Jett Kwong (Judges)

Triptolemos, Aiakos, and Rhadamanthys weigh our souls to permit entrance into Elysium and meet Persephone.

12 PERSEPHONE

Soloists- Sheila Brown Ellis (Persephone) with Lukas Papenfusscline
Persephone rules the kingdom of the dead, but is reborn to the living world each spring.

ABOUT FOUR LARKS

four larks is Director/Composer Mat Sweeney and Designer/Creative Producer Sebastian Peters-Lazaro. They create original performance work with an expanding collective of music, performance and design collaborators. Mat and Sebastian are graduates of UCLA, and developed their practice in Oakland, CA and Melbourne, Australia, before returning to L.A. in 2014. They are currently creating an immersive new music series with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

Co-founder Jesse Rasmussen (lyrics) returns to the company for *katabasis* from the East coast, after recently receiving her MFA from Yale. This production features new adaptations of two musical movements originally created for four larks' *Orpheus*, composed with longtime collaborator Ellen Warkentine. More information about four larks and collaborators can be found at fourlarks.com.

Special Thanks: Corby Baumgarten, Max Baumgarten, Andrea Peters, Jenise & Jim Sweeney, Ellen Warkentine, Prudence Rees-Lee, Michael Amico, Marc Perkins, Scott Ramsay & Chris Junge at Broadcast Support, Shelby Brown, and David Saunders

THE ENSEMBLE

Sheila Brown Ellis is the co-founder, vocalist, lyricist, and co-composer of *Annabel (lee)*, a critically-acclaimed, ethereal music project formed with her husband, Richard E. Featured on KCRW, KPFK, and BBC Radio 3; exhibited at Tate Modern; and the cover artist for *Bandcamp Weekly*. This is her first performance with four larks. annabel-lee.bandcamp.com

Maya Gingery is a flutist, dancer and educator. She is a student of Japanese noh theatre and a practitioner and teacher of ankoku butoh, the contemporary Japanese performance art. She played the role of Demeter in the four larks production of *Homeric Hymns*, presented at the Getty Villa in 2017.

Yvette Cornelia Holzwarth is a violinist, vocalist, and composer based in Los Angeles. Her diverse music expands beyond her classical background to include Eastern European folk, Arabic, Americana, experimental contemporary music, improvisation, and songwriting. She is soon releasing an album of original songs by her nine-piece ensemble. yvetteholzwarth.com

Sharon Chohi Kim is a voice artist and composer. She has performed with Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Opera Company, the Industry Opera Company, MOCA, the Broad Museum, and Walt Disney Hall in Los Angeles. She performed in four larks's *Undine* and has toured Canada, South Korea, and the U.K. singing experimental music. sharonchohikim.com

Jett Kwong is a vocalist, guzheng player, composer, writer, and director from Denver. She graduated from California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) in 2014, and has since been writing, performing, and making films with artists everywhere from Hong Kong to Berlin. This is her first collaboration with four larks. jettkwongkelly.com

Matt Orenstein is a Los Angeles-based composer and bassist. In 2017 he worked with four larks on *Homeric Hymns* and *Undine*. Films he has scored have had world premieres at festivals such as SXSW, Videoformes (Paris), Chicago Independent Film Festival, and Santa Barbara International Film Festival. mattorenstein.com

Ryan Parrish focuses mainly on Balkan folk and experimental musics, and is a member of Atomic Ape, Secret Chiefs 3, Duk, Izela, Midnight Sister, and Orkestar Meze. Ryan was recently featured playing *kavals* on